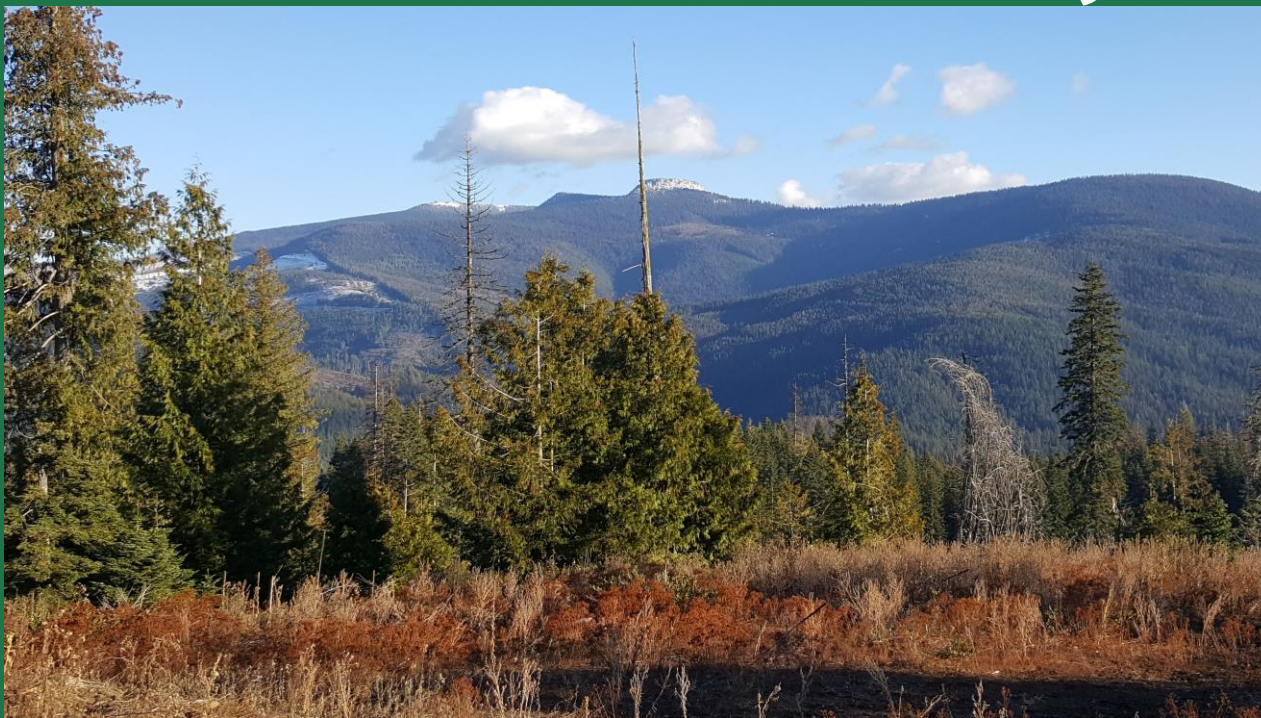




United States Department of Agriculture

Homestead Project



A Pre-decisional NEPA presentation

Project website: <https://www.fs.usda.gov/project/?project=53049>



Forest Service

St. Joe Ranger District

Homestead Project

September 2019

Homestead Project Area Boundary





Why Here, Why Now

Reconnaissance indicates that existing conditions for vegetation composition, structure, and health in the Homestead project area deviate from the desired conditions described in the Forest Plan.

A goal of the Forest Plan is to contribute to the social and economic well-being of local communities by promoting sustainable use of renewable natural resources, specifically, by providing timber for commercial harvest.

The Idaho Panhandle National Forest has a 5 year plan for projects. The Homestead Project was identified in 2012 as a possible project to help meet forest-wide objectives for output of timber and contributes to the nation strategy and goals.



Need for the Project

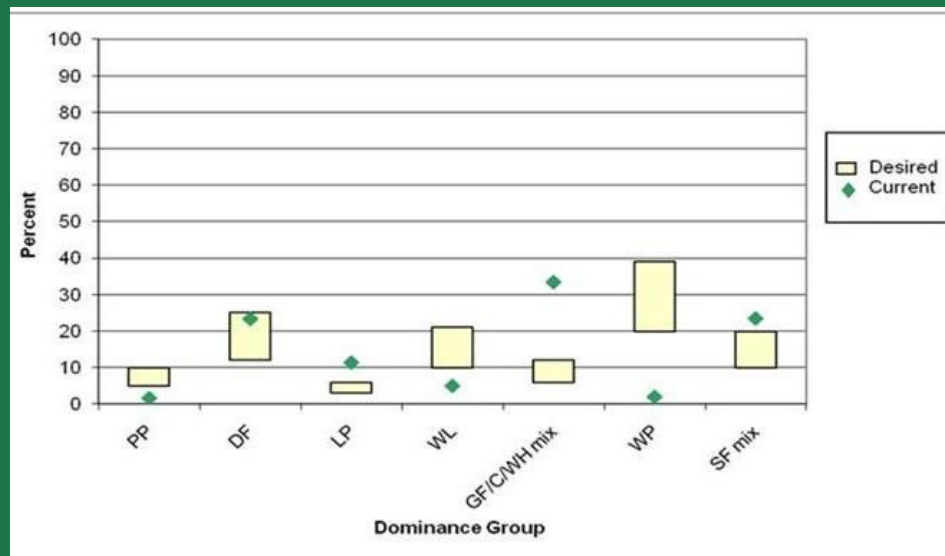
- Improve forest health and increase vegetation resilience to large disturbances such as severe fire and insect or disease outbreaks.
- Provide sustainable use of natural resources and benefits for local communities.
- Reduce Hazardous Fuels
- Improve Aquatic Habitat and Water Quality
- Update the Motor Vehicle Use Map



Consistency with the Forest Plan

Vegetation Desired Condition

The composition of the forest is within the desired ranges for the dominance groups illustrated in figure 2. More of the forest is dominated by western white pine, ponderosa pine, western larch, and white bark pine. Conversely, less of the forest is dominated by grand fir, western hemlock, western red cedar, Douglas-fir, lodgepole pine, and subalpine fir.



Objective -Forest Resilience

Increased relative representation of early seral, shade-intolerant, drought- and fire-tolerant, insect/disease resistant species dominance types (e.g., ponderosa pine, white pine, western larch, white bark pine, and hardwoods) on approximately 85,000 to 90,000 acres.



Consistency with the Forest Plan

Watershed Desired Condition

Stream channels transport water, sediment, and woody material over time, while maintaining their proper dimension, pattern, and profile for a given landscape and climatic setting. Sediment deposits, from over-bank flows, allow floodplain development and maintenance and support the propagation of flood-dependent riparian plant species. Surface and groundwater flows recharge riparian aquifers, provide for late-season flows, cold water temperatures, and sustain the function of surface and subsurface aquatic ecosystems.

Watershed Objectives

Trend 20 percent of sub watersheds that have a condition rating of “Moderate” or “High,” toward a better condition, through the removal of risk factors that are within reasonable control of management. Annually, improve aquatic ecosystem function and processes across 100 to 500 acres of sub watersheds that are rated as “Moderate” or “High” .





Consistency with the Forest Plan

Fire Desired Condition

The use of wildland fire (both planned and unplanned ignitions) increases in many areas across the Forest. Fire plays an increased role in helping to trend the vegetation towards the desired conditions while serving other important ecosystem functions. However, when necessary to protect life, property and key resources, many wildfires are still suppressed.

Fire Objective

The outcome is the treatment of fuels on approximately 6,000 to 16,000 acres annually on NFS lands, primarily through planned ignitions, mechanical vegetation treatments (these acres are also included in FW-OBJ-VEG-01), and unplanned ignitions. NFS lands within the Wildland Urban Interface are the highest priority for fuel treatment activities.



Heavy fuels build up in the project area





Consistency with the Forest Plan

Economic Desired Condition

The outputs and values provided by the Forest contribute to the local economy through the generation of jobs and income while creating products for use, both nationally and locally. Jobs and income generated by the activities and outputs from national forest management remain stable, contributing to the functional economy surrounding the IPNF.

Economic Objective

Annually offer timber for sale at the estimated predicted volume sold of 45 MMBF.

Economic Feasibility Analysis	
Sawtimber CCF	52,000
WTD*, Avg. Delivered	450. \$/MBF
*Weighted delivered	





Proposed Actions

Proposed Silviculture Treatment

- CC/RES = 263 ac
- Comm Thin = 49 ac
- Irregular Shelterwood = 93 ac
- Seed Tree = 401 ac
- Shelterwood = 432 ac

**Total harvest approximately
1,239 acres**

Watershed

- Aquatic Organism Passage on Shearer Cr
- Instream Habitat ~ 7 mi Marble Cr
- Thinning Riparian areas
- Mitigate Erosion and Head cutting
- Restore Hydrologic Function

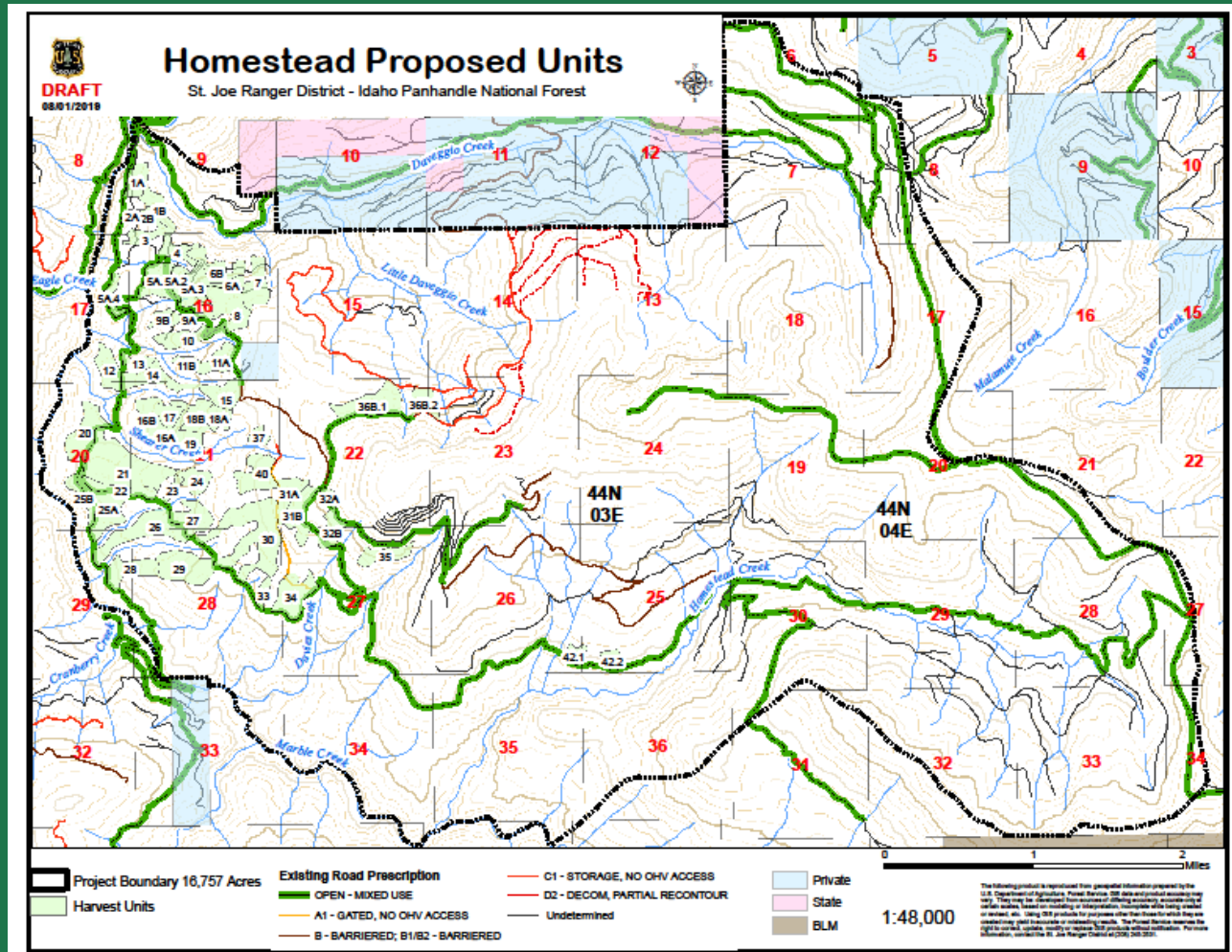
Prescribed Burning

- Burn ~ 1200 acres of slash and tops in the harvest units





Treatment Units





Proposed Actions, continued

Travel Management

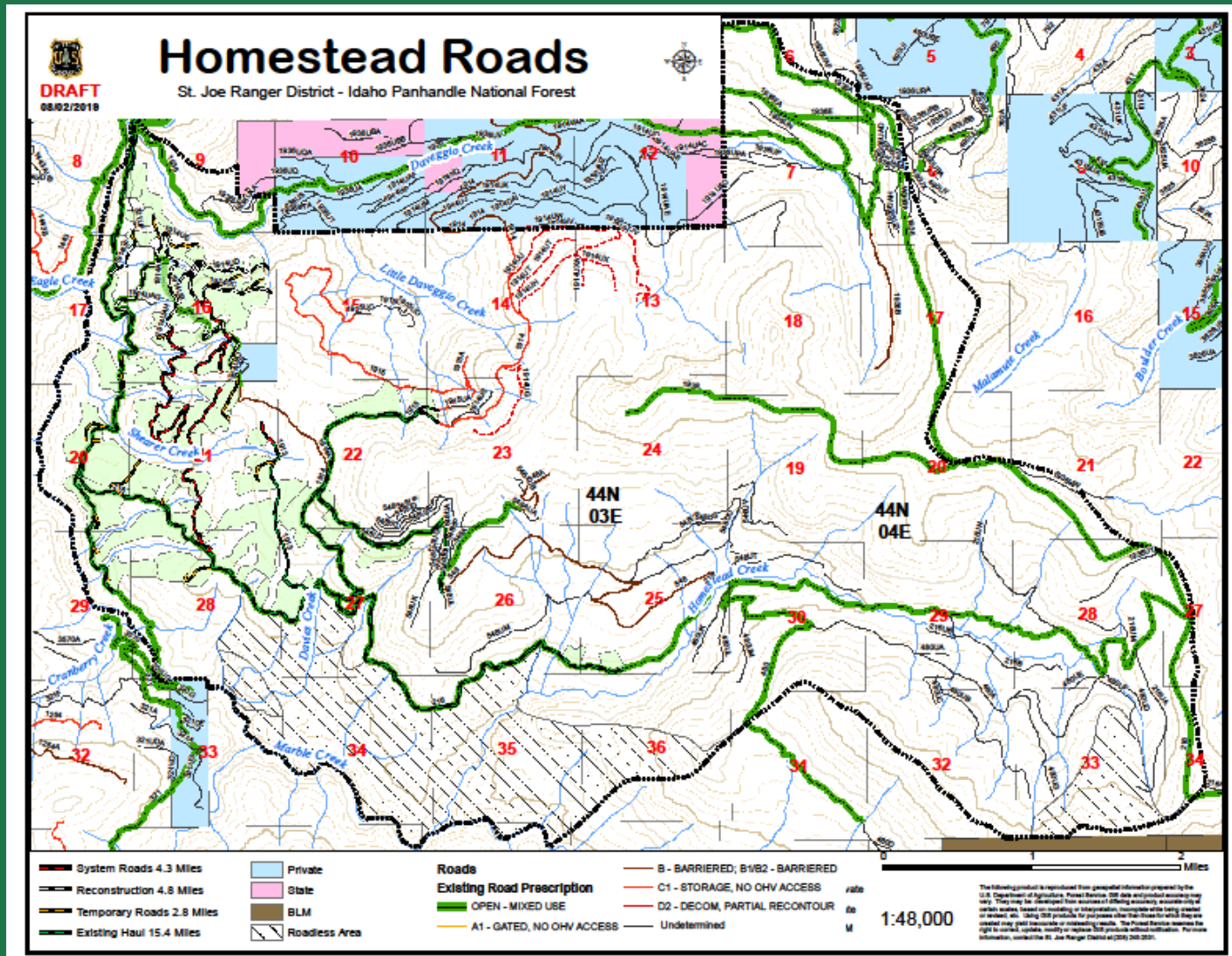
Road Type	Total Miles
New Construction	4.3
Reconstruction	4.8
Temporary Roads	2.8
Maintenance	47
Decommissioning	27.3

All mileages are approximate

- Newly constructed roads are generally gated and used for administrative use only.
- Reconstructed roads are roads that have been stored are not drivable.
- Temporary road are generally short spurs to access timber. They are decommissioned after treatments are complete .
- Maintenance includes, brushing, blading.....
- Decommissioning occurs when roads have been determined to no longer have an administrative use. Decommissioning reduces costs and sediment delivery to streams.



Homestead Roads in Project Area





Acres Excluded from Treatment

<u>Treatment Acres</u>	ACRES	%
Project Area	16,757	100.00
Proposed Harvest	1237.994	7.39
High Mass Failure Zones	1834.959	10.95
Existing Elk Security	1441.517	8.60
Additional Elk Security	52.38	0.31
Riparian Habitat Conservation Areas	3597.14	21.47
Old Growth	3758.307	22.43
Past Pruning	419.9227	2.51
Roadless Area	1888	11.27
White Bark Pine	69	0.41
Research Natural Area	306.1608	1.83
Totals	13367.39	79.77
Merged Footprint	9783.788	58.39

All numbers are approximate





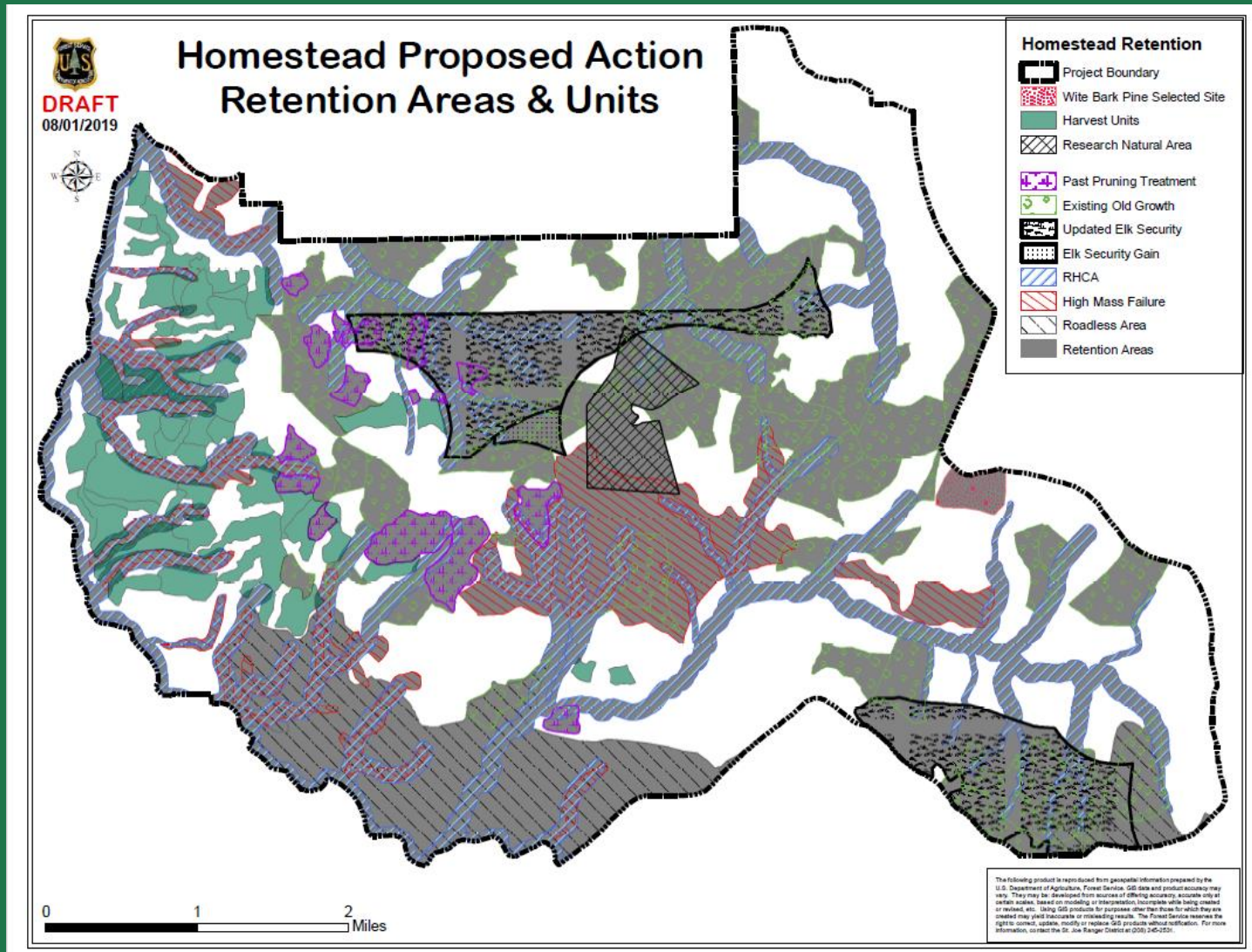
Why We Excluded Acres from Treatment in this Project Area



Some areas within the project boundary contain unique features, sensitive species of plants and animals, research areas, old growth trees and may have been previously harvested. While some of these areas can be actively managed others areas eliminated from treatment to conserve their composition, structure and function. Each area is fully assessed by resource specialists to determine the best approach to maintain the integrity of the resource.



Homestead Proposed Action Retention Areas and Units





The forester in this picture is dwarfed by old growth trees. A desired condition in the Forest plan is to increase the amount of old growth at the forest-wide scale.

Next Steps

- Resource Specialists continue to analyze survey data
- An Open House will be held in September
- A Environmental Assessment (EA) is being drafted
- The EA will be released for public comment in late January 2020
- Substantive Comments and Alternatives will be Assessed
- Responses to Comment's will be Drafted and Made Available
- A Decision Notice and Finding of No Significant Effect will be drafted





United States Department of Agriculture

Example of Root Rot



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Questions

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